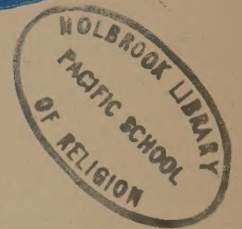




The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● FEBRUARY 1973



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IMPORTANT

Subscribers are kindly requested to renew their subscriptions for 1973, immediately.

MRS. D. L. GOPAL RATNAM,
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Announcement

ALERT IN OUR TIME

'Alert in our time' is the theme of the WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, March 2nd, 1973. The service has been prepared by the Women of New Zealand and they have developed the theme very well.

The Women of New Zealand call their fellow Christians in every country to join them in prayer and in the offering of themselves to be God's servants, alert today to every opportunity of loving service to all mankind.

May we continue to be alert in our time for the promptings of God.

Language copies can be had from the following people. Please order your copies in advance. All offerings should be sent to the NCCI Secretary, Nagpur, Maharashtra State, stating that it is for World Day of Prayer.

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Sunday Schools

Perhaps the Sunday Schools are the single most systematically organised activity of religious teaching in our Church. It is an obvious field for lay activity or 'ministry' within the Church and, especially since it can be carried on a day when most of the laity are not working otherwise, it comes to many of them as quite a welcome change from the routine of the week and as an opportunity to spend part of the 'Sabbath Day' in what they have been taught to regard as a sacred and meritorious activity in the Church. It is also generally assumed that any one who 'knows the Bible'—that is anyone who knows the biographical and historical facts narrated in it—ought to be able to teach the children without difficulty. For all these reasons the Sunday Schools get better organised than any other kind of teaching programme of the Church.

Sunday Schools can indeed play a very important part in the life of the Church. In all societies, including the primitive, the need for the instruction of the young has been realised and provided for. Such training relates partly to the teaching of skills necessary for pursuing a hereditary or an intended profession. But initiation in the faith and culture of the tribe or community has also been taken equally seriously. Many communities have also organised such training on a collective basis, appointing special instructors where necessary, so that the child is not handicapped by lack of resourcefulness on the part of his own parents. The Sunday Schools are the equivalent of this in the Church and it would be a great pity if it was not effective in the training of Christian children to become responsible and efficient members of the Church.

It would, however, be a mistake to think that the whole burden of education in the Church can be carried by the Sunday Schools. In developed communities education is not only for the child, but also for the adolescent and the adult and, these days, we also speak of 'continuing education' which can stop only at death. Sunday School education should, therefore, be planned and carried out as education suited to the needs and the understanding of children, but also providing a sound foundation for further education rather than as a complete, terminal religious education for even the less intellectual members of the Church. The common gibe about people staying at the Sunday School level of religious knowledge or thinking all through life is not necessarily a disparagement of Sunday School teaching, but only of the refusal of people to extend that knowledge or take that thinking further. It is like people refusing to read or learn anything beyond what they read and were able to understand when they were at an elementary school.

The methods and even the aims of educating children are different from those of educating those who are older. The education of the emotions and the will must have a great place, but the training of the reason must also be begun at this stage. This is also the stage for learning facts and for learning to interpret them or draw conclusions from them. Above everything else this is a time for inculcating social and moral values in them. And this has to be done on the basis of both the facts and the beliefs passed on to them. Hence the need for extreme carefulness and honesty about both the facts and the beliefs. If the facts will not sustain the values, or if the facts will eventually destroy the beliefs, the teaching of the beliefs or the presentation of the facts must have been defective. This applies to Sunday School teaching even more than to 'secular' teaching because faith has a much bigger place in religious than in social education.



Certain kinds of indoctrinative teaching in childhood have such lasting effects that it is said to be a dictum of the Jesuits that, if they could only have a child for the first five years of his life, then anybody else could have him for the rest of his life. A great deal of Sunday School teaching has the effect of closing the mind of the child giving it a permanent set, as it were, so that his mind, or at least a part of it, does not grow thereafter and functions only at a quite low level without being able to develop through reaction upon new facts and new experiences. This is the greatest danger in the common type of Sunday School teaching in our Church—that the faith it inculcates helps to promote piety, but does not help the faith to stand up to the challenges of the world or to react to new knowledge or exercise itself on it. On the contrary it fosters an attitude of escapism and distrust of the world and the intellect and the power of reason—which are all the gifts of God to man—to the Christian even more than to others.

The aim of Sunday School education must, therefore, be to prepare the child for encounter with the world—to foster freedom of the mind and the spirit and to give the child training in the proper and profitable use of that freedom. If, on the other hand, it fails to promote openness of mind and heart and closes and narrows them both, it can do more harm than good by doing permanent damage to personality as a whole and to the mind in particular so that the grown up man will be quite illfitted to carry out a mission to the world for His Master. Hence the need for the utmost carefulness and watchfulness in the choice and the supervision of those who are to be entrusted with the responsibility of teaching in Sunday School. Hence the need also to rethink the employment of every Christian teacher in a Christian school as a Sunday School teacher because he can be persuaded to regard such an assignment as the 'done thing' or as what he must undertake as an obligation in 'mission employment' which gives him privileges denied to those in other kinds of schools. It must also be asked whether students in High Schools and Colleges—for all their enthusiasm and academic training—have themselves outgrown the spiritual illiteracy or infantilism that afflicts so many of our congregations.

As has been said at the beginning, Sunday School education in the Church is very important, because it gives us the best opportunity as yet to offer methodical religious teaching to the young in our Church. But the orientation of the whole training programme needs very careful attention, since wrong orientation can vitiate not only the childhood stage of the members of the Church but their later lives also. The content of the teaching, too, has to be carefully thought over since an unwise and indiscriminate presentation—of a myth or legend as history or science, for example—will only create a faith that is brittle and not strong and an intellectual attitude that is narrow and fearful instead of one that is open to the truth and the future and, therefore,

courageous. The Church and the parishes must also resist the temptation to make use of very attractively got-up, persuasively advertised and cheaply sold, but theologically unsound syllabi and text-books and, instead, look for those in accordance with the insights of a developing theology and an unfolding faith. In fact, the Synod of the CSI should take steps for bringing out a handbook clearly outlining the aims, the immediate objectives, available syllabi of the right kind and effective methods of teaching. Otherwise most of our Sunday Schools will go on preparing Christians for withdrawal from the world and not for engagement with it or for the exercise of true faith.

Attention, Please !

Quite a few series of monthly articles on different aspects of the life and activities of our Church have been planned for the *South India Churchman*. For two years one concern of the Church was highlighted each month in articles taking up about half the pages in the *Churchman* for that month. A major concern will continue to be accented every month hereafter also, but in fewer articles and covering not more than a fourth of the copy for each month's issue. One half will also continue to carry other features like world Christian trends, reports, news from dioceses, book notes, letters to the editor and miscellaneous articles. But the remaining one-fourth will consist of the new series of single monthly articles on

Activities and Programmes of Dioceses and Parishes,
The Life of Congregations,
Outreach of Congregations, and
What individual institutions of the Church are standing
for—and how?

The aim of the proposed series of articles will be, not to 'tell' people how anything is to be done, but to get the readers—and the leaders of our Church in particular—to think on what must be the business or the life of the Church and its members gathering together as congregations for worship every Sunday. The authors will be chosen not so much for their ability to talk with authority on their subjects as for their willingness to initiate a debate, talking perhaps from nothing better than negative experience of failure or neglect. There are many things about which the Church ought to be concerned and making plans and taking active steps, but which hardly receive even marginal attention in our Church today. The first step in becoming active about these matters is to bring them within the focus of the attention of both leaders and members of the Church and to get them talking about them in their congregations and

dioceses—at congregational meetings or study groups and every kind of conference. But, since the fellowship of our Church is wider than that of a parish or a diocese—though one should expect it to be naturally more intensive there—it would help us all very greatly if the *Churchman* could be used as a forum for sharing experiences and pushing the debate further.

What is now so frustrating about the publication of a Christian paper like the *South India Churchman* is the almost total absence of any signs of reader reaction. By this I do not mean at all the sort of letters people write personally to the Editor of a paper to say how much they have appreciated this or that article in any particular issue or the general standard or orientation of the paper. One does get such letters from time to time. But what I have in mind is the lack of any evidence at all of any reaction on the part of readers of the magazine. It is quite possible that people do get moved or disturbed by what is published so that they talk about it to others and even try to do something about it where they are. But it is an editor's hope that they will also want to talk about it to other readers of the paper and tell them what they are already doing about it or proposing to do. Otherwise it is as though the Editor is pointlessly dealing with—and thrusting upon his readers—matters of no concern to them. So he wishes that a few readers at least should be touched or provoked so strongly by something that has been published as to write a letter or offer an article to add to or contradict what has been said or to look at other aspects of the theme that has been broached or even to abuse the writer—not sparing the editor either—for having dragged into the columns of a Christian paper what should have been kept out of them for the sake of propriety or peace.

Fortunately, the situation is not so depressing everywhere. While nearly all the papers of the other churches in India are characterised by the absence of vigorous reader response there is at least one Catholic Weekly where one comes across very lively debates on subjects ranging from liturgy to the loop and from celibacy of the priesthood to the celebration of Hindu festivals by Christians. Looking at the pages of this paper one certainly gets the feeling that the Roman 'sleepers' awake and wishes that the same phenomenon could be observed in the other churches too—in so far as it should manifest itself in their 'official organs'. Can it be that members of the Roman Church—especially the laity and, more particularly, the women among them—have found a new freedom of spirit and mind, but that the members of the other Confessions, having secured such freedom a long time ago, are no longer making a creative use of it? If this should be true, one could do no better than repeat the Pauline exhortation to the Galatians: 'Stand fast therefore in the liberty where-with Christ has made us free.'

Has the editor got your attention now—or hasn't he ?

Creation

(Ninth Sunday before Easter)

B. J. MANIKYA RAO,* *Kuthagudan*

The successful excursion of man to the moon—a most exciting scientific achievement—has exploded man's belief in ancient mythical stories of creation. In the face of such quick and great progress in science and technology, many individuals question the Biblical story of creation saying, 'Who can at this time of day trust a book which begins by saying that the world was created in six days?' No doubt, science gives facts about the universe: the roundness of the earth and its vastness, etc., but it is the Bible which tells about man's relationship with the universe and everything therein. However, the gains of scientific knowledge make heavy demands to the effect that the Christian belief that God created the world, the sun, the moon, the stars, the vegetation, the living creatures and man as a crown of His creation must be properly explained and justified with an open mind and sympathetic approach. The Bible is a record of man's experience of God's revelation and of events. It deals with timeless things. Especially, the books of Old Testament come from different periods and therefore have to be handled with discrimination. The stories of Adam and Eve are not based on historical records but depict and interpret man's relationship to his surroundings and to God. It is a book to be read at depth and not superficially. Science has changed the surface and foreground of the earth, but earth's background has not changed. The Bible deals with this background. Readers may not find in the Bible short and straightforward answers to their immediate problems and questions, but it must be admitted that the Bible is a source-book of profound answers to searching questions. The historical happenings of events such as the beginning of the world and the fall of man, from the point of view of the modern scientist and historian, would appear vague. Since these events lack some pertinent historical data, the Bible as such should not be treated as untrue. For the Bible is concerned not so much with historical data as with the interpretation of events through experience and man's relations to them. To make this point clear, I quote below a statement of Dr. Erik Routley:

Science will tell us how to be healthy and live longer. Something else must tell us what we are to do with health and long life . . . The source of that information is Bible.

Difficulties arise when we try to attribute literal value to the creation stories in Genesis and consider the whole of the Scriptures as literally true. A friend of Dr. Routley, expressing his doubts about the creation stories in the Bible once wrote to him as follows:

I confess that I am bewildered when I am asked to accept a literature that . . . tells me that the world was created in six days.

This friend is not alone to express such doubts and obviously such statements create doubts in the minds of simple believers and ordinary readers and force them to raise the question, 'Are the Bible stories true or not?'

Chapters 1 to 11 of Genesis which describe the origins of the universe provide a kind of answer to a series of questions. They speak of the beginnings of the world, of man

and of sin, etc., all pertaining to pre-historic traditions. These stories, although they are not history in the technical sense of the word, yet contain and convey great moral and religious lessons. C. Arnold Healing, commenting on these chapters writes as follows:

- (1) The story of the creation brings out . . . the character of the one true God, and exhibits man as the crown of creation, made in His image.
- (2) The story of the Fall brands sin as an intruder into God's scheme of the universe to be expelled at all costs, . . .
- (3) The story of the Flood shows the dire effects of sin in the world, and the beginnings of God's purpose to redeem it . . .
- (4) The story of Babel and the dispersion of the nations teaches that the enmities and severences between the nations of the earth have sprung from national pride, selfishness, and overweening ambition.

On a critical analysis of the above answers, the creation stories may not provide scientific answers. However, since the plane in which the answers are provided is altogether different, the answers in themselves do not contradict or invalidate, nor are they contradicted or invalidated by, a scientific answer.

In the Bible the origin stories represent a peculiar kind of literature which to an extent has similarities with the stories of Egypt, Babylon and Canaan, of those times, which give an account of the beginning of things. The modern reader calls these stories myths and it is, therefore, very important to know and understand the place of myth in Hebrew literature. In our common usage, a description of myth or anything mythical implies that the story is not true. But the true nature of myth is something different. A myth does not profess to give a record of events which happened in a particular place and at a particular time and date. And, it must also be admitted that historical truth is not the only kind of truth, 'and a myth can, and often does, represent a kind of truth which cannot be expressed in historical categories'. Therefore, one will not get an answer in the Bible if one puts the question, 'On what date did the world begin?' Since the Bible is not a text-book on Geology but deals with Theology, it always makes clear what effect any important event had on a man's relations with God and his surroundings. Another important aspect of the record maintained of the pre-historic traditions which helps us to understand and appreciate better the creation stories is the fact that these traditions were expressed in poetic form, whose main theme emphasises that God's relation to all things is personal but not superficial or mechanical. Being poetic in form, the records do not give details of scientific or historic interests about creation.

Some ancient religions say that the universe had come into being as a by-product of quarrels of deities or as a by-product of evil. The Bible says in Genesis that God created the heaven and the earth, and that 'God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was good.' (Gen. 1:31). In this we get the clue to the important Christian

* The Rev. B. J. Manikya Rao is a Presbyterian in Dornakal Diocese.—Ed.

belief that 'God is love'. It is goodness which overcomes evil and it is personal relationship that is more real and lasting than that which is mechanical and superficial.

Actually two accounts of creation appear in Genesis, covering the same ground but from different angles, just as four different persons wrote the Gospel account in the New Testament from four different angles. In fact these two accounts of creation (Genesis 1 and Genesis 2:4-25) come from two different periods. Both these accounts convey, not scientific speculation, but religious truths. The centre of the first story is God with creation in the forefront and the centre of the second one is Man with creation in the background. People who lived around Israel worshipped idols and forces of nature with cruel rites. Against such a background, Genesis revealed the one supreme God who is personal, all-powerful, benevolent, and who works with a purpose. Thus the works of creation manifest God's love, wisdom and power.

As scientific knowledge is developing, the scientist is only helped to acknowledge God's love, power and wisdom as manifested in creation. The American astronauts who encircled the moon and saw it for the first time from a close range had in wonder acclaimed God's creative activity as one of them recapitulated the creation story in Genesis 1, on the moon. In an earlier generation, a hymn writer had exclaimed on God's creation in the following words:

O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the works thy hand hath made;
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Going further back in history man's futile attempt to gauge God's wisdom is exposed in its hollowness in Job 38. God is portrayed as asking Job,

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? ...
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, ...

The creation which was found to be good in the beginning had lapsed into corruption and in the words of St. Paul, 'We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now'; (Romans 8:22). But God has not just made this universe and then left it to itself. In due time, God sent His son Jesus Christ to redeem and reconcile the world unto Himself, 'for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, ... all things were created through him and for him' (Col. 1:16). He is also the cornerstone of new creation who says, 'Behold, I make all things new' (Rev. 21:5). In order to be a citizen of the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, man must be a new creation in Jesus Christ.

The Church we need in Tamil Nadu

A situation study seminar was conducted by Fr. Claude D'Souza S.J., the national AICUF chaplain from October 2-6 at the St. Peter's Pastoral Institute, Poonamallee. The participants presented a study of the dioceses and parishes they came from and drew the following conclusions for the attention of the Church in Tamil Nadu.

A sign of God: Tamil Nadu is fast catching up with the trends of the modern world, some good, some bad. There is every danger that the deeper and nobler aspirations of men here are smothered by materialistic trends. The deep yearning in men for the supernatural should be met adequately by the Church by being a sign of God, giving a satisfaction of hope to all men. The Church should make its existence an active one, living the values of Christ's resurrection; values of love and goodness, not only in the religious field, but also in the social, economic, and cultural life of the people.

Community of Brotherhood: The Church in Tamil Nadu could manifest itself to be a genuine sign of God, primarily by being a community of brotherhood. We have still to go a long way in attaining this ideal. The hallmark of this community should be love; love without any distinction. 'By this all men will know, you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.' Christ Himself should be the source of unity in the Church. 'You are one in Christ Jesus.' The Church should be a brotherly community of those who receive Christ in faith and love, and at the same time transmit this faith and love to the wider range of men.

Committed to Life:

Faith and Catechism: The deeper the faith the deeper also the love and brotherhood in a Christian community. Our people in Tamil Nadu need an integral faith—faith committed to life—faith that is lived in all spheres of activity. Modern means of communication and effective

catechism should be used to deepen the faith. The educators of faith should be in the know of the latest techniques of teaching religion to children, youth and adults.

Meaningful worship: Sentimental piety and ritualism widely prevalent in the region hardly makes the liturgy, which should be a source of inspiration and involvement. Therefore the Church has to build up a new life in the community, by continuing Christ's liturgy, suited to the culture. Our people should be taught more and more to experience a genuine brotherliness in the liturgy.

A Democratic way of Thinking: Today the traditional secular structures in the world which served to keep a few 'sacred' and socio-economic values are replaced by different structures of a democratic nature, fulfilling the needs of an ever changing world. Pure traditional set-up of a 'universal authority', whether it is with regard to the proclamation or worship or leadership, will never be effective in a world of free thinking. Therefore a new democratic way of thinking should be formed in the Church with properly trained clergy and laity. They should be given the means and freedom to work in the local level in all fields of pastoral life and activity, always in accordance with the spirit of the Church.

A Dynamic Leadership: Leadership is vital to any organization. There is a lot of talent and competence among our people in educational, cultural and political fields but it is not properly pooled and channelled. Very often, leadership is stifled by traditional structures. On parish, diocesan, and regional levels keen interest should be shown in finding and forming leaders. The leadership in the Church should be marked on the one hand by a sincere loyalty to the Church, and on the other by a genuine spirit of service to all men and to the whole man.

Church in its Mission: 'As the Father has sent me, even so I send you'. The grace of God is not given to the

Christian community just to be preserved. The church has a mission to the world. The Church has to rejuvenate herself to bear effective witness to Christ.

Human values: Christ came to save and sanctify the world. To this purpose he became genuinely human and gave meaning to whatever was human, be it culture, science or art. Therefore the Church, the continued Christ Incarnate, has to be as human as the Christ Incarnate. She needs to acquire all the human values, purify them and offer them to God.

Man today is craving for freedom, dignity, recognition of his rights as a person; for unity, justice and peace. In all this the Church should not pose as a spectator, but involve herself and feel one with the people. Hence she has to be deep-rooted in the culture and civilization of the people. Incarnating herself into whatever is human is the only way the Church today can perform her function as the sign of God.

New Social Order: To be understood as a sign by the modern man who is fast progressing in science and technology, the Church should catch up with his pace. Hence the need for her involvement in the progress and development of the world. She should not merely be satisfied with doing some social work. Rather, she must go to the roots and do real social action, namely, cooperate with the government or other secular agencies to build up a socialistic pattern of society. At the same time the Church is essentially prophetic. She should also visualize and propose a new social order that liberates the struggling man.

Shaping Politics :

Crucial Issues: Involvement necessarily makes the Christian community take special interest in the crucial issues of the day. In the educational crisis today, the Church must come forward to put up a new system of education in view of the whole man. Politics, too, cannot be set aside. The Christian community must take a lead in shaping the political destiny of the nation. The growing youth affected by the new wave morality, must be taken into confidence and the community should educate them in Christian maturity. The Church cannot close her eye to the crisis of social justice, unemployment problem and caste system.

One with the Poor: Poverty is the most crucial issue of the day. Therefore the Christian community must show special concern for the poor. She should recognize in the poor and the suffering the likeness of Christ. The Church should attempt to eradicate poverty, primarily by sharing her own riches with the poor and joining hands with the secular institutions in helping the poor.

Service, not Domination: In all this mission, the attitude of the Church must be one of service, not domination. All authority is on fire today. The spirit of freedom and equality governs modern youth. The ecclesiastical authority too must be spelt and interpreted in a different way. 'I came to serve, not to be served'. The authority received is a mission to serve the people of God. Only in this spirit of service can the Church be truly the sign of God in the socialistic pattern of society that is dawning on all of us.

[Courtesy : *The New Leader*, Madras.]

Methods of Teaching in Sunday Schools Today

JOHN ROSE*, Palayamkottai

Before considering the methods of teaching in Sunday Schools we must first of all recognize the importance of running Sunday Schools. Since very early times in the Christian era the home, the school, and the church have contributed their part to the religious instruction of the child. But the parents are gradually losing control over their children now-a-days, and so they are not quite fitted to shoulder the responsibility of giving religious instruction at home. Bible teaching has become out of place in the present school curriculum. And even where half an hour of scripture teaching is attempted the students attend the class without their bibles and simply sit in their seats with their minds firmly closed, as it were. The pastors are so deeply engrossed in other Church affairs that they find little or no time to teach religion to the young. Hence the importance of the Sunday School today.

The Sunday School of today is the Church of tomorrow. The Sunday School is the hope of the nation. Adolescent crimes can be prevented if only our Sunday Schools enlist teachers filled with the Spirit of God and having real concern for children and their welfare. Hence it is obvious that the Sunday School workers need to be trained in modern methods of Scripture teaching in order that they may diligently and effectively help the children of the new generation.

After choosing the aim of the particular Bible portion to be taught, the Sunday School teacher must seriously think of using the method or combination of methods most

suited to the individual lesson and the particular class. The Master Teacher used various methods to teach the people thronged around Him. We too are called upon to follow His pattern if we are to be effective in our teaching.

The following are some of the methods adopted in Sunday Schools today:—

1. Story Telling

The story method presents truth in action through the giving of an account of some incident or experience. It makes abstract virtues become alive, concrete and vital; it stirs the imagination; it arouses interest and curiosity; it appeals to the emotions and influences the will. Skilfully used, it will open windows of truth to all ages. The teacher carefully gives the introduction first, not presenting the theme of the story straightaway, as that will reduce the interest in the story. Then the events of the story are clearly narrated with expression and feeling. Next the teacher builds up suspense and interest culminating in the climax. Then comes the closing part to be done in a couple of sentences or so where no moralizing is attempted, leaving it open for the pupils themselves to derive the spiritual truth. This method is widely used by most Sunday School Teachers.

2. Lecture

The lecture consists of the direct presentation of the material by the teacher. This method will not be successful

* Mr. Rose is teaching in a High School at Palayamkottai and has been in charge of Sunday Schools in the town.—Ed.

unless the teacher himself is interesting. If he will consider his pupils more important than the material and present worthwhile information in a bright and interesting manner, this method can have a place in the teaching procedure. However, it stifles the initiative of the learners and trains them to depend upon others for their convictions. Hence this method is used for teaching only senior students and adults who can concentrate on a given subject for a longer period of time than children.

3. Question and Answer

The question and answer method is the active participation of the teacher and pupils in issues relative to lesson content and meaningful application to daily living. It is indeed the skilful use of questions that marks the good teacher. Dr. C. H. Benson says of teaching, 'It is a probing process in which the surgical instrument is the question. The response of the pupil, like the recovery of the patient, will depend upon the skill with which the instrument is used.' There are two aspects of the question and answer method. In the first place, the teacher questions the children to direct their thinking and to test their knowledge. On the other hand, the children are also encouraged to question the teacher to clear their doubts arising out of life situations. This method of teaching is usefully adopted in Sunday Schools today.

4. Discussion

Discussion also involves the use of many questions and answers, but goes beyond this to problem-solving by the group. It is seldom used with small children except in a limited conversational way. A discussion usually centres around a problem for which we desire a solution. The success or failure of the method depends largely upon leadership. This method is successfully followed in the Senior grade of the Sunday School.

5. Research

This method is used in the Intermediate and Senior grades of the Sunday School. This is given in the form of assignments to be done before coming to Sunday School and the findings reported in the class. Sometimes, the work is started in the Sunday class itself and completed

before the end of the period. The teacher's guidance is needed most in this method since the pupils are led to find out things for themselves.

6. Project

The project method is the process of teaching in which the teacher, staying in the background as far as possible, guides the class in a plan knit together as a unit. Pupil participation is readily achieved through this method. It develops a co-operative spirit and trains in responsibility and perseverance. Developing a worthwhile project involves recognition of a problem, planning the attack, and action carried through completion. A few projects attempted in the Senior grade are: Map making, Christmas drama and Visitation of the sick.

7. Handwork

This method is followed especially for the Beginners, Primary and Junior grades in the Sunday School. It is the process of learning in which the pupils make things which are meaningfully related to the lesson. Handwork is not used as an end in itself, but rather as an effective tool to help the teacher in the accomplishing of his objective. He correlates the handwork with the lesson while it is in progress.

8. Dramatization

The dramatization method is a vital means of intensifying learning through actual participation by the pupil in the portrayal of the events of the story. Little children love to be animals in the ark, sheep in the sheepfold, or Daniel in the lion's den. Older children portray more complete stories as the method is developed.

No matter how well taught a lesson may be, if there is not a message to the pupils, there is no permanent benefit. The lesson is the only vehicle for carrying the message. The lesson is the bottle, the message is the oil. The lesson is the ship, the message is the cargo. The pupil should be able to leave the lesson behind and carry the message away. How often do we hear Christian men and women say that they do not remember a single fact taught by their Sunday School teachers in earlier years, but that they remember the effects of that teaching upon their lives!

When a Sunday School may do More Harm than Good

W. S. PACKIANATHAN,* *Palayamkottai*

Not a pleasant subject to dwell on, but it is a question about Sunday School work which we cannot and must not ignore. We see everywhere in our midst the results of bad religious education. Religious exhibitionism of all types flourish among us, unworthy of a century-and-more old Church. Far too much of our public utterances in the name of evangelism is primitive, crude and unedifying. The blame for this cannot all be laid upon the Sunday School, but a good share of it must. Educational research reveals that much of a child's whole future is determined by what happens to him and his mind between the ages of 3 and 6. In religious matters, too, this is true. The religious education of a child, like his general education, is no light matter. The child is the father of the man. If the child is only fed with primitive and crude forms of Christianity, he grows up to be only a primitive Christian. Apart from the

mysterious working of the Holy Spirit, only the most careful and responsible system of religious education can produce a Christian in his right relation to God, the Universe and Eternity.

My first point, then, is that the Sunday School can do an incalculable harm if the teaching is short-sighted, oversimplified and authoritarian. The epic story of Gideon is a good illustration. So much can be done with this story, but so little is. The epic can be presented as a stunt of some mysterious power (deity) or as the working of the power of God in developing a human personality. Too often it is treated as a stunt and the student is led to believe that such stunts are characteristic of Jehovah. He performs miracles and the believer builds his faith in Him on these miracles. The treatment of this epic should rather be one

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of research. The child should be led to see the historical background and the hope of Israel pinned on its youth. The son of a Scion of Jacob feels intensely the shameful plight Israel has been in, and the rest of the story tells how a hero is made of an ordinary man and how he regains freedom for his people for a time. To make this hero-epic a simple mystery-story is really to miss the point. Of course the supernatural in the narrative strikes the reader head-on. This, coupled with an over-wrought sense of literal faith in the Bible, leads the unwary teacher to dwell more on the miraculous than on the natural working of God's spirit in human history. The Bible is our indisputable authority, but each story in it is not independent of the rest of it. The teacher should be sufficiently qualified to interpret the Word of God as a whole, not merely read and believe a text. That would be to over-simplify.

Prayer is the life-breath of a Christian. Yet how misused it is and how misperformed! As a rule our Sunday Schools are badly staffed. One Sunday School I recently visited has on its teaching staff only High School students, all below the age of 18. These are ashamed to pray in public, so someone who is reputed to have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit is generally invited to offer the opening prayer. These prayers are, to say the least, far above the spiritual and moral experience of the under-twelves who form the majority in the Sunday School. As a result a false notion of what a prayer ought to be is given and our children only learn to imitate such 'high-falutin' prayers and not to pray naturally or realistically. The chief motif of these prayers is not the depth of thought or concern for others but dwelling in the realms of the unreal and rapturous. Consequently public prayer is regarded by the average Christian as something to be left to the priests or the specially gifted. If the Sunday School does not help in the early recognition of prayer as simple and direct communion with God we are losing for our children the most valuable weapon there is to fight the battle of life.

Formal study of the Bible begins for our children in the Sunday School. Here they learn either to look upon the Bible as a library of books to be read, examined and cherished or as a totem to be feared and worshipped. Bibliolatry has been described as a close neighbour to idolatry. If at the Sunday School level the young Christian develops an unquestioning attitude and fear to raise even the most obvious questions, then we are offending his intelligence and doing him a great injury. They go through

life frightened to use their intelligence in the matter of God and religion. Much too great a distinction is made between the intellect and the soul. But the two must be seen as inter-dependent. Neither should snuff out the other. It seems to be the heritage of Indian Christianity to believe rather than understand, to profess rather than live. If this heritage is perpetuated we shall not be doing the future generation any good. At an early age the Christian must be encouraged to examine the scriptures closely and even boldly. Fear to do this is to doubt the wisdom and veracity of God's word. If the Sunday School so emphasises the scriptures as the express word of God that the child is frightened to ask, once in a while, 'Is this really how it happened?' then the Sunday School is doing a great harm. When dealing with the Creation story, for instance, if the child's faith is required to stretch too far, either his faith snaps or his poise and balance break down. We must not push our children to such extremes.

When talking about the healthy attitude to the Bible, I am afraid I must go back to the subject of the staff. Fortunately we have the most efficient teacher in the Bible itself. An unbiased reader, reading through the Bible, can distinguish the imaginative from the historical, the hopeful wishes from the declarations of God, and so on. Unfortunately, there are hardly any such readers. Most are biased. We flatter ourselves as being on the side of God only when we swear by every word in the Bible. Whether this attitude is born of real loyalty or of fear is not certain. I suspect in most of us it is fear. Where high school students alone are available to teach in our Sunday Schools, there is a great danger of perpetuating this fear for any fresh light in the understanding of the written word of God. These student teachers should have free access to consultation in the form of extensive lesson notes drawn up at a liberal school or board. Every endeavour should be made to draw in more grown-ups and the better qualified to teach in our Sunday Schools. The young and the less qualified among us should be welcomed to help in simple story telling, singing sessions, in the production of teaching aids, and so forth. The actual teaching should be left to those who have read more widely and those who appreciate the evils of a closed mind. The Bible is still an unexhausted ocean and the precious pearls have not all been brought up. It is with this awareness and humility that a Sunday School teacher should enter this ministry open to the layman, and if the right approach is made there will be many to answer the call.

The Meaning of Faith for a Congregation

D. I. VEDANAYAGAM,* *Madras*

Every congregation is a part of the universal Church of God and each congregation has been and is God's cell in and through which God, revealed by Jesus Christ, has been proclaimed and the Gospel communicated to the people around. During successive years, various people have come together to receive the faith, to proclaim the faith and to live the faith as handed down by our Lord Jesus and then through His apostles and later through God's men who communicated this faith. People come together in faith to worship this God, father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and have witnessed to the saving grace of God, communicated to the world through Jesus, God incarnate 'Word became flesh—dwelling among men with grace and truth'.

What is faith? 'Faith is the state of being ultimately

concerned', says Paul Tillich. Man is concerned about many things—food, shelter, raiment and many other things, but there are people in every congregation who are neither pragmatic, nor materialistic but realistic and they believe that 'God loved the world so much that he gave his only son that everyone who has faith in him may not die but have eternal life', and they believe that God's ultimate concern is man. If God's ultimate concern is man, the Church, a community of believers, the Body of Christ, has the same concern.

Today man lives in chaos and crisis and while he longs for harmony, he finds himself often in disharmony. If man is to live that abundant life intended by the maker, our God, he has to first live in harmony with God in his inner being

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and to move into the sectors of man in harmony with himself and the purpose of God for man. Here is a crisis. Man has developed an ego, which makes him neither a subordinate nor a superordinate. He is neither Adam before the fall nor Adam after the fall. He has one foot within the garden of Eden and another foot in the vastness of the jungle and so he is neither saint nor irredeemable sinner. This is his predicament. The living community, believing in God's ultimate concern for man, must be in God's movement activated in and through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, to liberate man from this predicament. This new ego which neither condemns him nor elevates him must be brought under the controlling power of God. More attention is to be given to individual need. But alas the world today is moving towards being tied to the mass and the individual does not count. How wonderful that Jesus was in the crowd but did not forget the individual! 'Who is it that touched the hem of my garment?' asked Jesus. He has time for the woman by the well in Samaria. He has a concern for Zacheus. 'Climb down,' he cried to him. Mary Magdalene could claim his attention and it was not the spikenard but the movement of the woman that brought in a dialogue. He had a kind word to the thief by his side on Calvary. The congregation's faith in God's redemption in and through Jesus should include the crowd and the individual. Alas, in certain mass movement areas the missionary and the catechist have known the mass but not the individual and have nearly destroyed the faith in the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ.

The living community, the Christian congregation, believes and confesses that Jesus came to serve and not to be served. The believer knows perfectly well that his mission was expressed in the following words: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; He has sent me to announce the Good News to the poor; to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; to let the broken victims go free; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' If this is our faith, the body of believers must turn to the human need in the physical, mental and moral sectors. Within the spiritual, the believer has to meet the physical. Sometimes we move the other way round. We want to see the spiritual in the physical. To me it appears that we have looked that way many years and so the tree has been lost in the word. The Church has proclaimed Jesus in spiritual terms and not in physical terms. The people of God believe that Jesus came into the world and lived a physical life and turned to the physical needs of man. If this our faith is to be meaningful, we must ask the question, What is the church doing to touch the physical needs of man? What is each congregation doing? We have our services and we have our budgets and financial statements. We have our blessed sacrament and our prayer cell. We have preached and preached. But the people of God in several congregations have not walked with Jesus on the ground. Is the Church ever weary after a physical march? Has the church wept? Has the church accepted something that will cost? People have enjoyed grace but not 'costly

grace'. We came down from Calvary, but we cannot go up the Calvary. We have climbed up the mount of transfiguration, but failed miserably at the foot of the mount. We have received the law on the mount but not tackled the calf. Like Moses we too have broken the tablets of law by our anger and impatience. We allow the demented man to remain among the graves and are all more concerned about the pigs on the mountain side. The faith of the congregation has to be made more meaningful so that the people of God may move into the physical sectors of man more meaningfully and completely.

Our faith in the Good News of Jesus has to make the congregation proclaim the good news. This proclamation has to come out of a living faith in the Gospel and if it is not to be just propaganda, it has to be in two dimensions, the word and the image. What is the image that is projected by the life of the believer? He may have his doubts and sorrows, his temptations and failures, but if his faith is rooted and grounded in Christ as his Saviour and as Saviour of the world, he will project an image that communicates goodness, joy, peace and reconciliation. Not only by word but by the deed this good news has to be proclaimed.

Our doctrine and dogma tells us that we are a body and members one of another and that each has a gift and that this gift is to be exercised in the building up of the body of Christ. The people of God believe so. We proclaim collectiveness but live in separation. How is the Christian different from the non-Christian who goes to the temple with his offering? He goes and returns. He is satisfied that he has offered. He has offered and God has blessed. Perhaps the difference is that Christians sing together (some don't sing), we say Amen together (some don't even say it), we move to the rails for communion together, but each one moves as one and not as a part of the family of God. We have not bothered to live together. We have not thought in terms of oneness, one Church, one faith, one baptism. Our faith is lived on the surface and not in depth. Can the Church of today enter into the life together of the early Church in Ephesus. Antioch, Rome or Philippi. Our faith in the oneness of the Church and our credal affirmation of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church will become meaningful only by dynamic action. If so, the Christian in the congregation and the congregation as a community must see something beyond himself or itself, beyond the individual and the insular congregational interest and especially beyond individual and congregational power politics. May the Holy Spirit of God destroy the walls of separation and help the congregation to be a living community, living not for self even in the collective sense, but beyond that self for the universal self.

Faith is a call to commitment to Jesus Christ not simply as a factor in one's own salvation but as a new and living way whereby each congregation is involved in a movement to activate God's purpose and achieve fulfilment. It is a call to discipleship to Jesus and to be his apostle—to be apostolic.

How St. George's Cathedral Parish Reaches out into the World

EBENEZER IMMANUEL,* *Madras*

I wonder whether the heading or the question given as heading for the article is put right. It seems to suggest that the Cathedral Parish is an isolated body reaching out into the world from time to time. This is often the misconception of any church. The church reaching out into the world. No, the church can never be outside the world to reach into it. It is placed rightly in the world. And in being in the world the church has to be purposeful and meaningful in the world and for the world. What then is the purpose of the church in the world? Why does it exist in the world?

One might get the following answer from the circle of good churchmen. A church like the Cathedral is a very worthwhile thing. It ministers to four hundred and odd families in the city. It holds morning and evening worship week by week and takes care of the spiritual welfare of the members. If this is the answer we give and are contented with it, then we cannot find any other people more selfish and narrow-minded than ourselves. If we are such Christians we might be very good and useful to the church, but the world would have no use of us. Perhaps it might spit us out in due course.

What I have been saying so far are mere words. I think we would be better in the world with less words and more action. Some years ago the Cathedral called for interested people to start a social action committee comprising Doctors, Teachers, Managers and people of other walks of life. A Social Worker was appointed full-time. The social action committee met month after month and discussed and listened to the speakers from outside. Not much action came out of these meetings. But with the coming of the Rev. F. N. Sugirtharaj a department was opened in the Cathedral called the Department of Urban Ministry. The Rev. Sugirtharaj took responsibility as the Presbyter for Urban Ministry. Nearly two and a half years ago he started a Community Welfare Centre with the help of the Social Worker. The Centre is situated in an unrecognized slum in the heart of the city called Halls Garden, where a thousand families of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Anglo-Indians of all walks of life live. The Centre is open on five days of the week. Two hundred children are given milk and bread with the help of the Tamilnadu Government since CASA supplies stopped. Two days in the week free dispensary is run in which members of Cathedral, Doctors and others, help. There is a family planning unit. Government General Hospital uses this Centre as the base for eradication of venereal disease. The Centre runs a day care

centre for children of working parents. Sewing school for girls, night school for children and adult literacy programme as well. The Social Worker organises technical training for boys in Auto work and Lathe work, Carpentry, etc. The community of the Halls Garden is happy because the church, instead of asking people to come to its compound for help, has come to their slum to help. The Social Worker is also organising Community Organisation programmes in the slum and people approach the right persons to get what they want to be done in their slum. Recently they sent a deputation to the Commissioner and got the sanitary conditions improved.

There is a home for the aged attached to the Community Welfare Centre with ten inmates. But I don't say much about it because in this work the church has not reached into the world but is serving itself, for all the inmates are Christians. But I soon expect a day will come when inmates will be drawn on the basis of old age and not on the basis of religion.

The Cathedral is also interested in a leprosy rehabilitation programme in Keerasath, run by the Rev. Joseph John. The Cathedral encourages its members to sponsor the families there. Thus we have twenty-six sponsors who support one family each with Rs. 20 a month.

The Social Action Committee has grown to be too large to be called a committee; therefore it is now called the Social Action Group, which meets once a month and has an Executive which meets once a month. The group has delegated responsibilities to its members to be involved in the work of the Community Welfare Centre, Home for the aged, Leprosy work, employment bureau, cultural associations, elderly people's association and so on.

One thing we are sure of. Pastors may come and go, but the Cathedral Parish will continue to do these and more, for their eyes are now opened. The Cathedral also helps rural churches for building their schools and running them. It has committed itself to a lakh of Rupees towards elementary education and Twenty-five thousand Rupees towards a dispensary in one of the rural pastorates.

What I have been saying so far is only a tiny little of what should be done by the Church. It is only a beginning. I should be happy if every church began to do something. Then you would find a number of avenues in which the church could be purposeful in the world. The church's great task of evangelism would be of no use unless it was backed by such a genuine social concern and an awareness of the needs of the world.

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Looking Towards the Future in Mysore Central Diocese

GILL, BISHOP, *Bangalore*

A brief resume of the background of this Diocese may be necessary for some readers. The various accessions to the Diocese after union brought it to unmanageable dimensions in terms of geographical area. The second scheme of division provided for three successor Dioceses and one of the greatest benefits of this was that each Diocese would be more representative of the former traditions. While ensuring the full autonomy of each Diocese the Scheme of division made provision for maintaining unity in certain aspects of work for the mutual benefit of all, through inter-diocesan Boards. Having lived and worked together for so long we did not want to lose the benefits of sharing together on a wider level. In certain areas of work there are obvious advantages in consultation at State level. In the years preceding division commissions had been at work in the fields of Education, Boarding Homes and Medical work. Plans were being implemented which should not be brought to a halt because of the division. The Inter-Diocesan Boards are consultative bodies to assist the Dioceses and are not super bodies over the Dioceses.

The three new Dioceses were born at midnight on April 30th, 1970. The Central Diocese is the most compact of the three, comprising the Districts of Bangalore, Tumkur and K.G.F. The Kannada-speaking and Tamil-speaking congregations are almost equally divided. Added to this there are English, Telugu and Hindi speaking congregations which create obvious difficulties at diocesan level. Since I am writing this article within a month of taking charge as Bishop of the Diocese, I can look at the future with a certain freshness, but with the disadvantage that I cannot assume to have the authority of the Diocese in what I may write. I hope the fact that the *Churchman* is commencing a series of articles looking to the future indicates that we have now completed our Silver Jubilee self-examination.

The structure of the Church has been built on the full-time ordained Ministry. This is likely to remain so for some time to come. This is on the pattern of the West. A largely Urban Diocese like Mysore Central does not face the same difficulties as many others in maintaining such a Ministry. On a wider level there is an urgency in re-examining this system in the Indian context. This re-examination should also include the method and cost of training for the Ministry. The Diocese has setup a Commission to look into the whole question of redeployment of the Ministry. I hope it will present a forward-looking report unbiased by present structure and pressures and that the Diocese will be bold to take action resulting in much greater efficiency. The Diocese has only a few Senior Presbyters and it has become the practice to re-employ Presbyters on an honorarium after they reach the retirement age. There was a dearth in recruitment during the past 20 years resulting in few presbyters now being available for senior posts. During the past few years, however, there has been a steep rise in the flow of candidates and these are now coming out of the Colleges. More attention needs to be given to the method of recruitment which now rests only on local recommendations and a brief interview at the Ministerial Committee. We are now following up a suggestion of recruitment of Senior candidates. There are men of deep Christian commitment and spiritual maturity who have served the Church during their leisure hours while pursuing their occupations in business, industry, government service, etc. Some are prepared to take premature retirement, take a course of concentrated study and devote the remainder of their working life to the Church. Such men would bring a richness of experience

and understanding of the place of the Church in the World. Implementation of the scheme for honorary presbyters has been beset with such problems as a presbyter outstaying his period of welcome in one congregation, transfer of his employment to another area, a back-door to the full-time ministry, etc. Permission to assist in the communion may be all that is necessary in most town churches.

In the social and economic field emphasis is being placed on training in trades relevant to present needs. At the Vocational Centre in Tumkur a training course for rural electricians has been established. The boys trained will be employed in rural areas and specialising in the service of pumpsets for which at present very limited personnel are available. The first group leaves in 1973. The next course planned is for rural mechanics, who will also be directed to the rural areas to maintain and service agricultural implements and machinery which is sure to build up in the next decade. A local survey is in progress to assess the need for establishing a Creche Nurses Training Centre for which there is a growing demand in the expanding industries of Bangalore. A Vocational Guidance *cum* Employment Officer has just been appointed and will set up a Bureau in Bangalore. He is also being given the responsibility of following up the recommendations of the CSI Survey on Technical and Vocational Training.

Mysore was one of the areas where much emphasis was placed on education during the last century. Most of the Schools at primary level have either been handed over to Government or closed. The diocese continues to be involved in secondary education and we have several schools in Bangalore, which maintain very high standards. By their standards alone they are worthy to be continued. Thinking is going on among some of the forward-looking educationalists of the diocese that our educational institutions should be more job-orientated. It is not known what form this will take, but it is certainly a move to be encouraged. Despite the largely urban area there is a growing demand for boarding homes because of home situations. With all the pressures of life in a rapidly expanding industrial city like Bangalore home life is inevitably neglected and this is an area of vital concern for the Church.

Following up the proposals of the last Synod the Diocese has appointed a pastor as full-time Youth Worker. After attending the three-month course in Madras he is now working out his programme for training youth leaders, and Sunday School teachers, and starting Youth Clubs. This has been little more than a topic of discussion in the past, but this full-time appointment is a sure indication that the Diocese is taking the training of youth more seriously.

Owing to dynamic leadership the medical work of the diocese is following a progressive policy. The CSI Hospital in Bangalore has become a teaching hospital affiliated to St. John's Medical College. The policy of cooperating with others in the field is encouraging. There is no duplication or rivalry of existing facilities. The prospects for the future indicate that even the rapid advance of the past few years will soon be accelerated. Specialisation being implemented in the thoracic and other areas will make the hospital a premier institution in Bangalore in the coming years. Along with this specialisation is the twin arm of extension work in the slums and needy areas of Bangalore and outlying Districts. To combine such a high degree of specialisation with community welfare is no mean achievement.

Probably the greatest change one would like to see in the future is in the relationship of the local congregation and

institutions. By and large the local congregation has looked to the institution for support. The congregation looks to the school for education of Christian children and employment of Christian teachers; to the hospital for treatment of Christian patients, etc. There is too much division between the institution and the local congregation. The institution should not exist as a separate entity to provide benefits and facilities for the Christian community. It should be the expression of Christian concern in the world. The institution must have its origin and basis in the congregation. One sees too little evidence of support of the institution in a practical way from the local congregation as its out-reach into the world. There are a few healthy

examples of pastorates expressing this concern. The most well known is the Industrial Team Service and out-reach work of St. Mark's Cathedral. Its example of donating the total proceeds of the annual festival to causes outside the Church is a model to be followed. St. John's Church Pastorate recently started, and fully supported, a hostel for Tibetan Refugees. While there needs to be some control of such activities at Diocesan level in order to keep in view the priorities, one would like to see much more local initiative of this kind. If more programmes of this kind can be locally sponsored the Church will not only be relevant in the world, but will be seen to be relevant and have a more effective witness in the days ahead.

A Letter from the Acting Moderator

Dear Friends,

Greetings to you all in His precious Name. I would like to share with you some of my experiences and the news of the C.S.I. during the last few months.

Since Bishop Gnanadasan could not go to Britain to take part in the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the C.S.I. in a few important cities in Britain I had to go. I took part in the Silver Jubilee Celebrations in Edinburgh, Dublin, Manchester and London. In all these cities representatives of most of the protestant denominations took part. These services were arranged by the C.S.I. Council in Britain in collaboration with the regional councils of British churches. Everywhere there was great enthusiasm and a sense of profound gratitude to God for the formation of the church of South India twenty-five years ago and for her life and witness through these years. At the final service in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, the heads of the four Churches of which we formed a part before September 27th 1947, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the President of the Methodist Church, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland and the President of the Congregational Church, joined in the C.S.I. service of Holy Communion in an act of thanksgiving and penitence. There were about 2,000 in the cathedral and 948 communicants. A moving sermon was preached by the Rev. Harry Morton thanking God for the C.S.I. and challenging the churches in Britain to become a united Church.

This invitation was extended to me by the British Council of Missionary Societies and through their kindness I was also nominated as a delegate to the British Church leaders' conference, which was held in Birmingham. 400 church leaders attended the conference. The theme was 'Discovering God's will to-day'. Leaders of all the churches in Britain including the Roman Catholics took active part in the conference.

I was able to understand from close quarters the problems facing the Church in Britain and the way in which they were grappling with them. The main question was, how can the Church witness to its Lord in the midst of local, national and international problems and make the witness relevant to the secular situation? There was quite a sprinkling of young delegates who, in the early stages of the conference, were very impatient with the senior members of the Conference for not coming to grips with the problems, but towards the end the gap between the generations seemed to have been bridged in that the seniors realized that the present structures were out of date and needed to be drastically changed and the younger generation realized that the church cannot simply do away with organization and structure altogether. What the conference

will achieve is to be seen in the impact that it will make upon the church in Britain and what action will be taken locally by the leaders who attended the conference. For, whether in Britain or India or any where, it is absolutely true that what happens locally is what really matters.

Throughout my visit of Britain I had the great joy of meeting missionaries who had worked in the C.S.I. in various Dioceses and who wanted me to carry their warm greetings to the C.S.I. I might mention Bishop A. M. Hollis, our first Moderator, Bishop A. H. Legg, Bishop Thorp, Bishop Lipp, Sister Carol Graham and Mrs. Priestley among the many friends who worked in the C.S.I. The C.S.I. is grateful to the C.S.I. Council in Britain and the British Council of Missionary Societies for all these celebrations and their invitation to the Deputy Moderator to take part in the Silver Jubilee Celebrations and the Church Leaders' Conference in Britain.

The Silver Jubilee Celebrations were conducted in Madras on the 26th, 27th and 28th of September. The Jubilee was fittingly celebrated. There were many lapses, but we felt the joyous presence of the Lord in all the celebrations and functions. We are deeply grateful to the Madras Diocese for having made elaborate arrangements for all the celebrations under the leadership of Bishop Leslie Newbigin. It is hoped that these celebrations will have an impact upon the Dioceses and the local congregations that they may inspire us to deeper dedication to our Lord and a more effective witness in all spheres of life.

Our country is in the grip of a gigantic movement for change and betterment of society. And if the church is to be what Christ our Lord commanded her to be then we desperately need deeper dedication to Christ our Lord and wider penetration into the social, economic and political life of our people. I hope throughout this Jubilee year this will be our two-fold thrust.

An outline for evaluation and planning has been prepared by a small group in which the whole church will, I hope, in some way be involved. This is now finalised and will be sent to all the Dioceses for study and action. The results of this study and action are to be further studied and consolidated at the Synod of 1974 for a planned implementation. This is not intended to be just an academic study, but a study rooted in prayer and guided by the Holy spirit which will be a kind of cell movement within the church which will result in making the Church more of a movement of dynamic power and less of an institutional organization.

At the Synod Executive Committee which met on the 16th, 17th and 18th of October at Whitefield, Bangalore,

Mrs. Gnanadason's resignation on behalf of Bishop Gnanadason as Diocesan Bishop and Moderator was accepted. We continue to pray for Bishop Gnanadason and Mrs. Gnanadason that God's presence and power and comfort may be very real and close to them at this time. They are now in Nagearcoil. I have been asked to carry on as the Acting Moderator and the Synod Executive Committee elected Bishop Leslie Newbiggin as the Acting Deputy Moderator. We very much need and long for your prayers.

It is a sad and sudden loss to the C.S.I. that Bishop V. William of South Kerala passed away on the 4th of November. It was a case of heart weakness. He was very much loved and respected. He was a man of great patience and wisdom. We thank God for his life and

service and witness in the C.S.I. during many years. May we uphold Mrs. William in our prayers so that she may be comforted and strengthened.

The Rev. I. Jesudasan, Principal of K.U.T. Seminary, Trivandrum is appointed Commisary of South Kerala Diocese. The Rev. J. A. Balasingh of Tirunelveli Diocese has been appointed Commisary for Kanyakumari Diocese. You will be happy to know that Rev. J. Tangamuttu will be consecrated as Bishop in Coimbatore Diocese on the 18th of December. Please pray for Rev. Tangamuttu and the Diocese of Coimbatore.

May the Lord grant to you a New Year of adventure in the power of the Holy Spirit.

N. D. ANANDARAO SAMUEL.

Letter to the Editor

A TEST OF INDIGENISATION OF THE CHURCH

Sir,

Having spoken to our forefathers through sages and prophets and become flesh and blood two thousand years ago, our Lord Jesus Christ has in recent times corrected the theological perspective of the Church in His summary of faith as expounded to Sadhu Sunder Singh in the Upanishadic Catechism at the Master's Feet.

To those missionaries who look down on Afro-Asian people much the same as Jews viewed the Samaritans two thousand years ago, it is impossible that Jesus should hail from Nazareth of Samaria or that he should reveal his catechism through an Indian Sadhu. However painful it may be even to the vast majority of modern Christendom, the Lord does wondrous works raising his apostles among people of no account, putting to shame arrogant ones who claim to have a special pipeline to Him by virtue of manumission.

The Lord raises apostles even today and it is the responsibility of the people of the Lord to recognise the true apostles for what they are. Our spiritual eyes are often obscured and as a result we fail to realise the true Messengers. It is not enough to mumble the Apostle's creed. Jesus applied this test to the Pharisees of His day by asking them whether John be of God or not. The common people gladly recognised John as a prophet of God, but the Pharisees found it difficult to admit it, because in their heart of hearts they disowned him. The position with regard to Sadhu Sunder Singh or any other Indian apostle is very similar. The vast majority of laity give a ready assent to the Apostleship of Sadhu Sunder Singh, but the leaders of the church, trained to despise themselves and look up to Westerners for guidance and leadership, are unable to admit his apostleship and therefore naturally question the right of the Lord Jesus Christ to dismantle the theological fictions that they have raised about themselves in the name of Christ.

The problem with regard to John is clarified in the first chapter of John. The delegates from Jewish theologians and the Separated Ones seek to know whether John is Elijah returned, the expected Messiah or the expected Prophet and, if he is none of these, how he dare change the ordinances of Moses which reserved the rite of baptism at the age of thirty for the priests. And it is significant that Jesus took his baptism at the age of thirty, that John was of priestly lineage and brother of Jesus and that James the Elder was murdered in 62 AD by a rival for the office of High Priesthood. It was difficult for scribes and pharisees

to permit John to change tradition and practices which they believed were established by Moses.

We have a similar problem now. It is only people who have no direct access to Jesus who stand on tradition to deny vital spiritual insights that the Lord is imparting to the Church. The growth of the church has always been bedevilled by these problems. The Apostle Paul had to contend with those who would rather limit the appeal of the Gospel so that they could continue to feel comfortable within the Jewish traditions. It would have been a mistake on his part if he had given up the fight to free the Gentile churches from the limitations of purely Jewish traditions. Eventually James the Elder and Peter had to fall in line and accept a major Christian insight from someone who was ordained by prophets of Antioch and not by any of the Twelve. Even so, today the Apostolic authority of Sadhu Sunder Singh is being challenged by leaders in the Church who believe that all good things come from Europe and America and that the Christian God has a special relationship with those continents.

It is not enough to sit on the floor, create temple motif architecture for the church buildings and use Carnatic tunes for indigenisation. We have to cut loose from a spiritual inertia which looks to the Western missionaries even for lead in indigenisation. Our missionaries seem to be surprised that laymen in Kanyakumari are concerned about the affairs of any other diocese. So far, they have been led to believe that only western men have the right to have overall concern about the Church of South India and naturally they consider it impertinence for mere Indian laymen to be concerned about affairs of the whole Indian Church. Apostolic claims are advanced for bishops which have very little authority in the scripture. The New Testament uses the terms bishop, pastor and presbyter interchangeably and apostles are set apart by God, unlike bishop-pastor-presbyters set apart by ecclesiastical leaders.

One can understand the unwillingness of bishops to share with Indian Christian laity the enthusiasm to recognise the apostleship since it devalues their own pretensions to spiritual authority very much like the dilemma the Pharisees found themselves in when Jesus asked them about John. I was told that at a recent meeting of the Synod Executive one bishop said that I write to him four to five letters every month whereas he could not have, if he was challenged, produced more than five letters in all from me. Another bishop seems to have said that the Church of South India cannot seek to alter the assigned representation in the World Council of Churches. But the Constitution of the World Council of Churches expressly states that

churches should make their objections to the next assembly allocation of seats two years before the assembly. Since the Fifth Assembly meets in 1975, the objection has to be made before the Helsinki meeting of the Central Committee in June 1973 and yet one of our missionary bishops has thus blocked discussion of adequate representation for Asia in the next assembly. Asian and African representation is being reduced from 16% and 14% to 6% and 8% by the adamant opposition of American churches to give weightage by both Christian and national population and by insisting on representation entirely by Christian population which gives disproportionate representation to whites racially.

In these days any ecumenical council would have to concern itself with witness to Asia which contains 85% of non-Christian population and has only 5% Christian population. A world council dominated by white men would fail miserably to change our witness in response to indigenous situations in Asia and persist in foisting outworn creedal statements irrelevant in Asian situations. One can understand the anxiety of the white missionaries even to consider a new arrangement which would give Europe 40% seats, Asia and America 25% each and Africa

10%. Any tyro would know that white dominance would continue with 65% Euro-American representation. But our missionary bishops do not even allow the proposal for adequate weightage for Asia to be discussed at the CSI Synod Executive. I learn that the issue inscribed by the Moderator was taken off the agenda because, apparently, the Indian CSI delegate to the World Council of Churches who requested the Moderator to raise the issue has only got the status of an individual. But that is true also of the foreign missionary. Does he have the right to prevent an issue raised by the official CSI representative to the ecumenical council and inscribed on the agenda by the Moderator on such spurious grounds?

I believe Sadhu Sunder Singh is not just an individual. He is the Apostle raised by the Lord Jesus Christ to build a united Church in India and an ecumenical Church in the twentieth century. The Dominical Catechism in Upanishad form known as 'At the Master's Feet' is more complete than any catechism of Western Christians and is better suited to India. It has become indeed a test of our commitment to indigenisation.

Neyyoor

A. J. GEORGE

Appeals for Support

1. Development of Vishranthi Nilayam

Vishranthi Nilayam is the Mother House for the Women's Order of the C.S.I. This is not only a Home for women but for men also who need a quiet rest and refreshment.

Several branches of the Church and Inter-denominational groups find Vishranthi an ideal place for retreats and conferences of various kinds. Vishranthi has been used for all kinds of programmes like the Sensitivity programme for Trade Union leaders, Industrial Teams and for Training programmes of youth and Church leaders. All those who come here, including the Roman Catholic leaders, appreciate much the daily prayers in the Chapel.

Vishranthi is a real 'power house' of prayer for the C.S.I. and, whilst continuing to be a unifying force within our Church, it is making a valuable contribution towards fellowship with other Churches in India and overseas. It is a veritable haven of rest not only for Church workers but for an increasing number of non-Christians who value

the Christian fellowship and the regular Prayer life of the House.

The Chapel and rooms for retired Sisters are too old to repair and the dining/store room/kitchen block is completely inadequate for present and future use, and hence rebuilding is urgently necessary. Donations from 'Friends of Vishranthi Nilayam' and rents from a block of offices shortly to be constructed, will cover current expenditure, but help is essential for the capital outlay in buildings.

The Synod therefore appeals to you to give, as generously as possible, to this project so that the valuable work may continue and Vishranthi Nilayam be adequate to meet the urgent needs of the present and the challenges of the future.

MRS. D. L. GOPAL RATNAM,
Hony. General Secretary, CSI.

2. Mission to Fiji

In February 1971 the NCCI received a request to send a missionary to Fiji Islands. The NCCI Assembly at its last meeting at Kottayam enthusiastically accepted this invitation and authorised its Executive Committee to do the needful.

Out of an estimated population of over 5 lakhs nearly 52% are Indians (descendants of indentured labourers and businessmen who went over to Fiji in the colonial days) and the rest are mostly Fijians with a sprinkling of Europeans, Chinese, etc.

Virtually 100% of the people of Fijian origin are Christians, but of the Indians only 3% are Christian. The same variety of religious sects as in India exists in Fiji, but separation from India for over four generations has made Fijian Indians less orthodox.

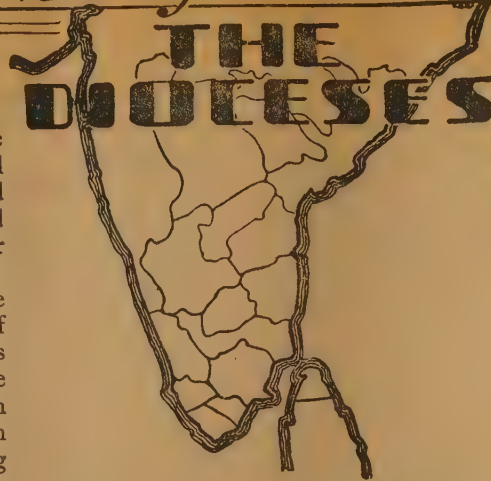
The Church in Fiji wants an Indian missionary to go to Fiji in May 1973 for a period of one year to begin with to conduct evangelistic campaigns, especially among the non-Christian Indian population. After very careful search and thought the NCCI has selected the Rev. Mathra Dass who is working as an evangelist at large in the Amirtsar Diocese of the CNI.

The NCCI needs Rs. 11,000 to pay for his travel expenses to Fiji and back. Owing to restrictions in regard to foreign exchange we will not be able to send funds out of India for his salary and other expenses, but the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches has come to our help and has agreed to pay his salary.

We need your generous help in this venture. We welcome gifts from individuals, groups and churches so that we can raise the Rs. 11,000 needed for this project. We are sure that our appeal will meet with your generous help so that the Rev. Mathra Dass can go to Fiji as our ambassador in Christ. Above all we request you for your continued prayers for him, for the NCCI and for the people and churches in Fiji so that our efforts may meet the approval of our Lord and His name glorified unto the ends of the earth.

M. A. Z. ROLSTON,
General Secretary.

THE DIOCESES



MADHYA KERALA

This is an important year in the history of the Women's work in Parkal Mission. Twenty-five years have passed since the Women's work was started in 1947 and hence this is the Silver Jubilee year.

When we turn back our eyes to the past twenty-five years there are lots of things to praise God for, chiefly His wonderful guidance in the work for the extension of His Kingdom. Even though we, the weak servants, (Sr. Mary John and Sr. Mary Thomas), made a long leap in the utter darkness of this area twenty-five years ago, it is still a gratifying experience that all of His promises have been fulfilled; and this too has been for His glory only. It would be equally apt to say about the women in Parkal area that 'the people in darkness have seen a great light'. Hundreds of illiterates have become literate. There are many women in this area who can boldly say that they found happiness through Jesus Christ. They have been handing over this great experience to their children and many of their children are still residing and studying in the boarding houses where they get excellent coaching for body, mind and soul. Christian folk-songs which were learnt and practised during those days are sung with much enthusiasm and renewed interest by the women in the villages even today. Women have been trying their level best to get away from the meshes of the evil social customs which sometimes try to lead on to the non-Christian pattern and modes of living. The average Christian giving has been increased for which women have played an important part. On the whole the women's work in this area has been developing much and this itself is one of the main sources and means of the development of the Church in Parkal Mission.

From 1947 to 1955 the Women's work in this field was done under the supervision of the Mission Board in Kerala. But in 1955 this work was entirely entrusted to the Bethel Ashram.

Sr. Edith Neve and Sr. Rachel Joseph, the founders of Bethel Ashram at Thiruvalla, felt that the women's work should be carried on entirely by the Bethel Ashram and so they were thinking seriously and praying about opening a branch at Parkal and they could feel the decision of the Mission Board as a revealed and divine guidance in this matter. Therefore Sr. Edith Neve after much consultation came to

the field to find out possibilities and needs of opening the branch here. She brought Sr. Anne Thomas also to work in this field, and she has been a great help in all matters. The regular activities of the Ashram which were manifold have been speeded up by her visit and presence. Sr. Edith Neve stayed with us only for three weeks and laid the foundation of the Ashram Branch in Parkal and then returned to Kerala. We are very grateful and indebted to the mother Ashram at Thiruvalla.

The centre of the Ashram was in Parkal upto the year 1959. During this period a Boarding Home for children was started, the workers' wives were given education and evangelistic work was regularly done. The Silver Jubilee of the Parkal Mission was celebrated in 1949 and the women of Parkal had a great part in it.

In 1959 the Diocese decided to move the Ashram centre to Kattappalli as the need and possibilities were greater there. There were no workers at Kattappalli, where the first Mission centre was, and the believers had gone astray without any shepherding. The shifting of the Ashram to Kattappalli was a new venture and the evangelistic work in that area got a new vitality in Kattappalli. We started a day and night school, built the church and started a dispensary. During this time nine children were brought up in the Ashram. These children are being looked after in 'Bethlehem' which is the special Home for them. We thank God for all His promises that have been given to us.

A new branch was opened at Bhagirathypet village, where Rev. K. J. Chacko worked for a few years. After his retirement from the service. Miss M. S. Thankamma was doing medical work in this village. But the work in this village was stopped in 1971 owing to the lack of workers.

In 1969 the Mission Board sent recommendations to the Parkal Mission Annual Committee to entrust the Boarding work to the Sisters. According to the arrangements the Ashram branch was reopened at Parkal. Nine children from Kattappalli were also brought to Parkal where Sr. Mary Thomas is in charge of the Ashram and the Boarding Home.

In Kattappalli we have been doing evangelistic work and medical work and conducting village school. Bible training students are also trained very often. In our dispensary many patients come and get treatment. Sometimes in-patients are also looked after. At Parkal our work is mainly among the Boarding children whom we are entrusted with. During the year 1972-73 there are 240 children in the Home studying in various classes from Nursery class to University level.

A lame boy, N. Ravinder Reddy, has been supported by the Women's fellowship of the Hyderabad Malayalee congregation. Now he is in the 2nd year B.A. class. It is with great pleasure that we note here that the H.E. Nizam Trust Association has presented a motor tricycle to him for his travel. Also they are giving Rs. 20 monthly for his studies. Our thanks are due to them. Two more babies have been received in the year 1971.

MADRAS

On 7th December the Governor of Tamil Nadu opened a modern five-storey air-conditioned office building at the junction of Mount Road and Whites Road, Madras. The site had formerly been occupied by a small elementary school, but since the position was in the heart of one of rapidly developing areas of Madras, the Diocese decided to move the school elsewhere and use the site for a modern building. The cost of about 36 lakhs has been met by the sale of properties which were not being fully used. The net income, after allowing for all costs, taxes and depreciation, is expected to be over 10%.

A large cross is placed high up on the wall which overlooks Mount Road, and a plaque in the entrance to the building states that this cross has been placed there as a perpetual sign that the income accruing from the building is to

(Continued on p. 15)



Bangladesh Prime Minister Thanks Churches for Aid

Dacca—New projects and programmes totalling \$1905,710 were approved by the Executive Committee of the Bangladesh Ecumenical Relief and Rehabilitation Service (BERRS) of the World Council of Churches when it met here 31st October-1st November.

The projects cover agricultural relief, tools and materials for craftsmen and fishermen, rehabilitation work at the Shere-e-Bangla Hospital, community building projects throughout the country, the supply of two-way radios to the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation and women's rehabilitation work.

Earlier, members of the committee had made field trips to different parts of Bangladesh to see work carried out by BERRS as part of a \$13 million programme supported by churches all around the world.

Prime Minister Mujibur Rahman told the Committee that Bangladesh was grateful for the help BERRS has given to the country. He prophesied Bangladesh would soon produce more food. 'I'm sure we will be self-sufficient in four years,' he said.

Agreement was reached on a hand-over of BERRS responsibilities to the newly established Development Commission of the Jatio Church Parishad (National Council of Churches). The agreed date is February 1, 1973. Thus responsibility for church programmes in Bangladesh will pass from an international consortium of church agencies to the churches of Bangladesh.

EPS.

Set-back for Church Union

The high hopes that the United Church of Sri Lanka would come into being before the end of 1972 have received a set-back from which the Church will not quickly recover. After all five churches had accepted the Scheme of Union by substantial majorities, a group of dissident Anglican laymen got a court injunction restraining the Bishop of Colombo Diocese from implementing the Diocesan Council's decision to enter the union, alleging procedural irregularities in the voting. Their action, putting a sudden stop to all preparation for union, has

shocked the Church and produced a numbness from which it has not yet recovered.

In the meantime the Methodist Church (which originated the call to unity 30 years ago) and the heads of the uniting churches collectively have pledged to use this period of waiting to cultivate a deeper unity of spirit and practice at the congregational level as a preparation for the union which will surely come. In the matter of Christian unity, what the church needs today is a prophet of the stature of D. T. Niles to lead it forward through the world's labyrinthine ways to its true destiny.

—This Month: W.C.C.

Religious Freedom in North Vietnam

Religious groups appear to have as much freedom in North Vietnam as they do in the United States, Dr. David Hunter, Deputy General Secretary of the National Council of Churches (U.S.A.), said after a seven-day visit to Hanoi early last month. He could learn of no churchmen being imprisoned for their opposition to the government. But he added that 'churchmen, like all North Vietnamese citizens are expected to support the revolution, and our meetings indicated they are doing it with religious zeal'. Dr. Hunter and six others met with 11 U.S. prisoners and brought back 150 letters from various prisoners.

—This Month.

Lutherans Are Number 3

Lutheran churches around the world have a combined membership of 73.5 million. This represents a small increase (about 267,000) over 1971, but is below the 1970 figure of 75.1 million. Lutheranism is the third largest grouping of Christians after the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.

—This Month.

Personalities

Canon George Swartz, 44, has become the first coloured person to be consecrated Anglican bishop in South Africa.

As suffragan bishop of Cape Town he ministers to an area including many coloured people.

The Rev. Harry O. Morton, president of the Methodist Conference (U.K.)

has been appointed General Secretary of the British Council of Churches to succeed Bishop Kenneth Sansbury, who retires at age 68. Ordained in the Church of South India, Mr. Morton now serves on the staff of the Methodist Missionary Society. He will move to the BCC on 1st September, 1973.

—This Month.

Tragic Death of Mozambique Church Leader

Lausanne — The Mission Department of the French-speaking Protestant Church of Switzerland has been informed of the death of the Rev. Zedequias Manganhela, 60, President of the Presbyterian Church in Mozambique. Mr. Manganhela had been imprisoned on June 13, 1972, with 30 leaders and members of his Church and several hundred other Mozambicans. As a result of six months in isolation and the pressure of interrogation, he took his own life on the night of December 10/11.

He had been President of the Presbyterian Church since 1963 and was instrumental in achieving autonomy for the church. It was said that the Mozambicans' take-over of their own church affairs was one of the main accusations levelled against Mr. Manganhela and his colleagues by authorities in the Portuguese province. His ministry and church leadership were characterized by a strong ecumenical and missionary spirit.

EPS.

News from the Dioceses

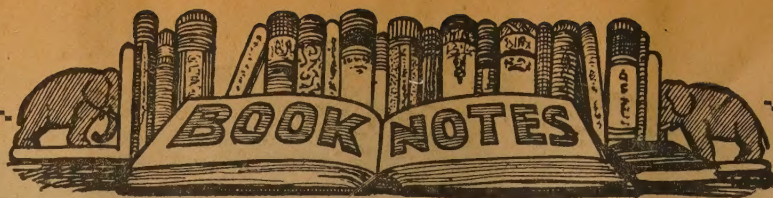
(Continued from p. 14)

be used solely for the service of men in the Spirit of Christ.

In the event that funds from overseas are drastically reduced, it is hoped that the income from the building will enable us to carry on our services to our neighbours without crippling cuts.

The income for the first month is to be donated to the Synod Silver Jubilee Fund for sending medical workers to Bangladesh.

L.N.



Outside the Camp

By R. H. HOOKER

C.L.S.—I.S.P.C., 62 pp., Rs. 2.25

The Camp is the Christian faith and 'Outside the Camp' are Hinduism, Islam and other faiths and no faith. The book is an account of the experiences and findings of the author on his quest for an understanding of people and faiths other than the Christian.

The quest begins with the author's visit to a meeting of a *satsangh* in Bareilly which thereafter becomes part of the weekly schedule for him. The readings there from the *Ramacharitam-anasa* and the *Gita* remind him forcibly of passages he is familiar with in both the Old and the New Testaments. He is equally impressed by the 'deep seriousness of purpose' of the assembled devotees of Rama and finds among them 'a joy and a gaiety in the atmosphere which is both genuine and infectious'. He does not, therefore, have any feeling at all of having left God behind. On the contrary he is convinced that 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is present and at work in that little group of people'.

The author is by no means unaware of, or indifferent to, differences. He can analyse and describe them as clearly and forcefully as any theologian as, for example, where he points out how 'the gulf between God and men' is bridged and even understood differently in Hinduism and Christianity. He is sure, however, that evangelism consists, not in calling attention to the differences, or in thrusting Christian doctrines and scriptures on men of other faiths, but in 'unveiling' the Christ who is already amongst them 'in a way that makes him intelligible and relevant'.

From his experience the author suggests three ways in which a beginning might be made in this task of 'unveiling'. One must learn to be present and listen as a friend—to sit beside rather than stand opposite—and to understand. Christians, as the author says, have made commendable efforts for over a hundred years to study the scriptures of other faiths, but not to find out what they mean to those who follow them. The third step is to ask questions which might help the men of other faiths to ponder more deeply the ultimate truths about life.

The second chapter is an account of the author's efforts to get the Muslim's eye, view as it were, of Islam. Meeting with initial rebuffs, and yet by dint of persistent attempts, he succeeds in

winning the confidence of a maulana first and later of other exponents of the Islamic faith. In this 'religion of the natural man' again he is convinced that, especially 'in the realm of prayer rather than in the realm of doctrine', there is 'a genuine seeking and a genuine finding of God'. And here, too, for the Christian, the process of the 'unveiling' of Christ has to begin with listening, understanding and friendly questioning.

The third chapter is concerned with Christian presence in the midst of unfaith. In the author's view the old methods of attacking atheism are quite ineffective. Instead, he says, here also we 'must first listen to what God is saying to us *through* them, before we dare to open our mouths to them'. He himself has listened closely to the voice of protest or revolt against all religion in stories and other literature found in secular books and magazines and the echoes of the message of the Biblical prophets in these writings move him to ask, 'Who is it who is whispering thoughts of anger and protest into the ears of these writers?' The Christian who seeks to engage in dialogue with such secular thinkers should, therefore, be aware that God, 'who is the most revolutionary character and the most radical protester' in the Bible is already present among them. Then he would first invite them 'to look at Jesus as *man* not as *God*'. 'For this to happen,' the author says, 'the Church itself must first discover Jesus as truly human, and this not merely as a matter of doctrine but as a matter of fact.'

The last chapter is a consideration of what must be done within the Camp itself. For too long, the author says, we have been trying to 'defend' God, who does not need our poor defence. Instead of building up fortifications for our faith against a siege, as it were, by other faiths, 'we must be open and vulnerable to the follies of man even as Christ was open and vulnerable'. He continues, 'Part of being vulnerable is to listen to—*expose our hearts and minds—to the full force of what the other man is saying even when he challenges our most precious and deeply held convictions, putting faith itself at risk.* To close our minds at this point, to refuse the pain of listening, is unbelief. 'He points out that such an approach has the incidental advantage of not requiring any money or cumbersome organization.

This booklet is essentially the

description of a spiritual journey and must be evaluated as such—and only by those who have themselves ventured on such a journey. But, as the author says, those who have done so are as yet only a small minority in the Church. However, he is hopeful of great and joyful discoveries to be made on the journey because 'it is minorities that make history'. Mr. Hooker is a pioneer within that minority and, taking a leaf from what he has said in relation to his main theme, we should listen to what God has to say to us through his ventures 'outside the Camp'. Then the book will become a challenge to us to decide to accept his understanding of the preaching of the gospel as talking with people of other faiths where God is present or to cling to our old understanding of it as conducting evangelistic forays into a godless and hostile world outside the camp to swell the numbers of those within.

D.A.T.

Tamil Saivism

(தமிழ்ச் சைவம்)

By T. DAYANANDAN FRANCIS,

Published for the Tamil Theological Book Club

By

The Christian Literature Society,
Madras-3.

pp. viii and 140

Price Rs. 6.30

The author 'is the present General Editor of the Tamil Theological Book Club. He is also a part-time lecturer at the Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary, Arasaradi, Madurai.'

The appellation *Tamil Saivism* seems to have been adopted to distinguish the Saivism of the Tamils from *Kashmir Saivism* of North India and *Lingayat Saivism* of the Karnataka region. The book contains six chapters, two appendices and a bibliography.

In chapter 1, the *distinctive characteristics of Saivism* are enumerated as follows: its antiquity from pre-Christian centuries, its emphasis on love, its conception of God as Beauty, its conception of the Universe as real and its identification with the religion of the Siddhas.

In chapter 2, the *theology* of Saivism is dealt with. Both Grace and Knowledge are equally emphasized in Saivism. The former is illustrated in the Saivite

canonical literature and the letter in the Siddhanta literature. God is both transcendental and immanent. He is omnipresent—He is Light—He is Love, a controlling, embracing and gracious love. He has a Form which is invisible, visible and a combination of both.

The nature of the Soul is then treated in its three states—the state of commingling, that of being bound and that of being released.

Then the *Panchakshra mantra Namah-sivaya*, is described. It is a symbolism representing the relation of the three entities, God, Soul and matter with one another.

In chapter 3, the *philosophy* of Saivism—the *Siva Siddhanta*—is explained. The fourteen canonical works—the *Siddhanta shastras* are briefly introduced. Later a brief summary of the twelve *sutras* of the classical work—*Siva-gnana-bodham*—is given. At the end of the chapter the 36 *reals* that constitute Matter are enumerated, together with the relation between the Vedanta and the Siddhanta.

Chapter 4 deals with *Saivism in practice*. There are two sections on worship; one is on Temple worship. Here are mentioned 15 temples where Siva is worshipped together with His Sakti. The other is on worship by Meditation—Yoga. Under religious behaviour morality is very much emphasized. The Saivite emblems *Vibudhi* and *Rudraksha* and their significance are also pointed out. Certain

penances and religious orders are briefly treated at the close of the chapter.

In chapter 5, the *Saivite Ministry* is taken up. The ministry of the Siddhas with short notes on seven of them is followed by that of the Heads of the Saivite Mutts. The part played by temple singers and priests, the Saivite Nayanmar and propagandists, receives a short description.

The last chapter deals with *Saivite-Christian Dialogue*. This chapter is divided into three sections: Christianity and other religions, Christian dialogue with other religionists and Christian dialogue with Saivites.

In appendix 1, the many names of Siva as mentioned in an ancient Tamil dictionary are given. In the second one are mentioned the eight heroic deeds of Siva as mentioned in the Saivite purana and mythologies.

The author has, in this volume, given succinctly a faithful and objective treatment of the religious tenets and practices of Saivism. In illustrating these he quotes profusely from the ancient Tamil classics, the Saivite canonical scriptures and treatises and post-canonical works—from the time of Tholkappiyar to Kirupananda Variyar of the present day. His object in writing this, he says, is to introduce Saivism to Tamil Christians so that a way may be opened for a dialogue with Saivites. And so his treatment is non-committal. Although other Christian writers have written about Saivism in English—such as

Dr Violet Paranjoti and Dr John Piet—this is the only volume of the kind in Tamil. The author has given here and there Christian parallels to Saivite religious tenets and practices in appropriate places. The author deserves the congratulation of the Tamil Christians.

There is one discrepancy which has escaped the notice of the author. On page 30, only three arms of Siva are mentioned; but on page 55 the four arms are correctly described.

One wishes the significance of the mantra *OM*, of the symbol *thiripundaram*, and the 60 *tatvikas* had been explained. (pp. 55, 107 and 75 respectively)

The names of the Sakti do not find a place in the list of some temples enumerated on pages 98-100.

One wonders whether the four Vedas mentioned in Saivite literature are the same as the Aryan Sanskrit Vedas, or the Tamil ones alleged to have been destroyed or lost.

This is a closely printed book with about 40 lines to a page. The many printing mistakes could have been corrected before publication. A subject index would have been an additional help to readers. Nevertheless this is an excellent introduction to Saivism presented to Tamil Christians. It is hoped they will find this very helpful in their dialogue with their Saivite brethren.

Kodaikanal

P. JOTHIMUTHU.

NOTICES

COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL TO HINDUS

The first seminar sponsored by the Theological Research and Communications Institute (TRACI), will be on the theme, 'Communicating the gospel to Hindus'. It is open to all (pastors and laymen) with a mature understanding of the Christian and Hindu faiths. Before he comes, each participant will write and submit a tract of 500-1000 words, for any main category of Hindu; this tract is to be submitted together with his application, by February 20, if possible. Participants will be guided to improve their tract so that it could be published. The cost of the seminar (including accommodation) will be Rs. 15.00 only; travel grants will also be available.

The dates of the seminar will be March 19-22, 1973, and it will be held at Union Biblical Seminary, Yeotmal. Send your tract and registration fee of Rs. 2.00, to: The Secretary, TRCI, Union Biblical Seminary, Yeotmal, Maharashtra, 445001. Further details available on request.

WANTED

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